

**Unintended Consequences: How the U.S.'s Fear of Socialism Affected Policy
Decisions in the Middle East**

An Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis

by

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ABSTRACT

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No decisions are made in a vacuum, especially in regards to foreign policy. The Cold War mindset permeated every level of politics in the United States, but the question of the unintended consequences of this unwavering diligence to the opposition of international Communism remains. In this paper, I argue that the policies of the Eisenhower administration in the Middle East ignored the regional politics in preference for a simplified “with us or against us” approach. This led to the penetration of Soviet influence into the region as this mindset alienated neutral countries and also set the foundation of the U.S. preference of Israel over nationalist Arab countries. The methods employed were retrospective research and one-on-one interviews conducted in Texas and Amman, Jordan. The retrospective research covers U.S. policy in the Middle East with a focus on Egypt, the leading Arab country at the time, from 1952-1967 to include the ramifications that became manifest after Eisenhower’s term in the White House. This revealed how Eisenhower’s policies intended to contain the U.S.S.R. alienated the neutral country of Egypt and pushed it to the Soviets for assistance. This in turn made Egypt appear more Communist-friendly and thus deserving of estrangement from Western favor and

assistance. Instead of addressing the greatest concern for those in the Middle East, the Arab Israeli conflict, the Eisenhower administration instead focused on the overarching Cold War goals and suffered the consequences of losing one side to the Soviets, Egypt and other nationalist Arab countries. Even after the United States stood by Egypt against Israel, Great Britain, and France in the Suez War, Eisenhower did not take advantage of his newfound popularity to push for peace and endear himself to both sides in the conflict but reverted back to policies analogous to those that alienated countries like Egypt in the first place. His overall policy goals for the region caused exactly what those goals intended to prevent. Considering that the U.S. government is currently wrapped up in the overarching foreign policy goal of ending terrorism, it is not unreasonable to speculate that the current policies will have unintended consequences of their own that may ultimately provide more issues for our country in the future.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is obvious to the majority of people here in the United States that the Middle East has become a region of upset and turmoil. The Arab Spring which began in 2010 provides a clear example of how unstable the region currently is. Given the fact that most of these countries were created in the 20th century many academics do not find these political disturbances surprising. However, the question still lingers as to what caused the growing tensions within these countries. For sure, many variables developed this bubbling disquiet over the years such as decades of uninterrupted rule by various dictators and Islamic politics, but the impact of the West is undeniable. Since the first time the British used the region as a trade route to India, Western powers have stretched their hands to influence the politics and future of the Middle East. It was not until World War II did the United States join Great Britain and France in their interest in the region, but considerable time has since passed revealing not only their objectives at the time but also the aftermath of those policies.

How much if at all did the United States' focus on Cold War objectives affect the Middle East and its relationship with those in the region? Given the enormous scope of the question, I will concentrate on the foreign policies of the Eisenhower administration in the Middle East and particularly in regards to Egypt. I argue that Eisenhower's and John Foster Dulles's policies were made as a reaction against the spread of socialism by the Soviet Union with little regard to regional politics and that this preference ultimately secured the relations of the U.S. with Israel and the Soviet Union with the nationalist Arab countries. The Cold War led the U.S. to some

foreign policy decisions that ultimately had far-reaching consequences for many countries in the Middle East, but this option was preferred purely because of a simplistic ultimatum: socialistic or pro-Western.

Objective

The purpose of my research is to determine the extent to which the U.S.'s fear of spreading socialism affected its policy decisions in the region of the Middle East during the Cold War. Given the breadth of information of involvement of the super powers in the Middle East during these years, this research focuses roughly on Eisenhower's years as president as a case study. No decisions are made in a vacuum but rather stem from other influences. My research will attempt to make a connection between the U.S.'s priority of stopping the spread of socialism to its ultimate preference for Israel over Egypt. It goes without saying that the decisions that the government makes even today stem from the influence of its priority of stopping terrorism. It is not unreasonable to predict that history will repeat itself.

It is clear to the U.S. government that some of its past actions in this region were meddlesome and blatantly went beyond the country's jurisdiction. This unfortunate reality can be remedied but only if we learn from it. If the government's decisions were simply rooted in this fear which led to these massive consequences for an entire region, some other priority could easily be influencing them right now, such as terrorism, as the U.S. continues to find itself wrapped up in Middle Eastern foreign policy.

Methods

The methods employed are retrospective research and one-on-one interviews. I researched U.S. policy in regards to Egypt and the Arab-Israeli conflict from 1952-1967, with background information on the creation of the contemporary governments of the two at this time. I extended the period in which I researched beyond Eisenhower's terms as president in order to examine the consequences of his administration's policies and how they affected relations between Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and subsequent U.S. presidents Kennedy and Johnson.

To supplement this research, I interviewed participants from three groups: professors who have expertise in the region to give their opinion on the issue, persons who are native to the Middle East to hear their personal experiences, and U.S. current or retired government officials who worked in a department or agency relating to foreign policy or relations during the years of the Cold War. Male and female participants were used so long as they were above the age of eighteen. International travel to the country of Jordan was also utilized to find interviewees. Given its central location in the Levant region, the country is susceptible to high flows of Middle Easterners from other countries due to refugee statuses as well as tourism in the summer months, the time I visited. It also afforded the opportunity to speak with many Palestinians and Jordanians, those most affected by the Arab conflict with Israel.

I recommend further research into other areas and times of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East during the Cold War so as to study if this mentality also led to the rise of many of the leaders whom we are now watching fall as the Arab Spring continues.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Beginning of Israel (1948)

Although the United States proudly takes credit as the first state to recognize the new state of Israel most cannot name the second. An educated guess of Britain for the third proves correct. Michael Adams, a reporter in the Middle East around the Suez Crisis of 1956 asked an Arab if the man knew. However, the Arab “thought the question was irrelevant” and Adams was not even sure the man believed him when he revealed the second country as the Soviet Union (1958, 110). Looking back, the relationships of those in the region to the superpowers appeared clear cut: Israel with the United States and most of the Arab states with the Soviet Union. However, Israel proved to be the issue on which the U.S. and the Soviet Union agreed upon the most at least until the 1967 war. Although for very different ideological reasons, the U.S.S.R. even supported Israel’s creation in 1948, supporting the U.N.’s 1947 partition plan and supplying arms to the hatchling state (Lenczowski 1971, 58). These unusual agreements did not live long for the previously stated partnerships did in fact come to fruition, but from 1947 to just before the Six Day war in 1967, the two super powers found themselves almost uncomfortably on the same side of things.

The Egyptian Revolution (1952)

The 1948 War heavily impacted the Egyptian military man, Gamal Abdel Nasser, who was convinced that “to fight for the defense of Arab Palestine was not merely a matter of ethnic or religious sympathy but of Egyptian national security” (Stephens 1971, 85). Nasser believed that only Arab unity could crush the imperialist regimes that supported the new state of Israel

(Stephens 1971, 86). He would begin this great work within his own country, with the overthrow of *فاروق الأول*, King Farouk I. At the time, Britain still had a heavy hand in Egyptian affairs through this complacent king while Nasser served in the Free Officers' Committee, "a clandestine movement dedicated to the concept that Egypt should be Egyptian" (Neff 1981, 68). With the assistance of Amer and Kamal ed-din Hussein, he outlined the plans himself for the coup. The men focused on a design that enabled them to oust Farouk as quickly as possible, first by usurping control of the military, then securing control of the civil government, appointing a new prime minister, and then finally ridding themselves of the monarch (Stephens 1971, 105). By focusing on these crucial points, Nasser and the Free Officers Committee hoped to turn their attention back to the welfare of the country to "pave the way towards a new era in which the people will enjoy their sovereign rights and live in dignity" (Stephens 1971, 107). They did not feel as though they could execute Farouk without a fair trial nor did they wish to have the country caught up in the distracting politics that the trial would likely produce. Although Nasser served as a mastermind behind the coup, he did not yet ascend to Egypt's highest position in the immediacy of the overthrow. The U.S. ambassador sent a message to the new President of Egypt, Muhammad Naguib, in response to the events assuring him that the United States would consider the matter an internal affair but also asked that the king and his family would be allowed to leave Egypt unharmed and "with honor" (Stephens 1971, 108). In January of that same year, President Truman feared that the nationalist movements and expulsion of the British with the exile of Farouk would leave the country vulnerable to Soviet penetration. He sent Kermit Roosevelt along with other C.I.A. agents to identify a possibly pro-NATO nationalist to bring Egypt back to stability (Oren 2007, 508). Nasser found favor in their report and thus the United States had little incentive to intervene in Egypt, even to the assistance of their ally, Britain. On July 26, just

two days after Nasser's nearly bloodless *coup*, King Farouk left the country aboard his yacht (Neff 1981, 70). In a moment of great foreshadowing, Farouk told Naguib as he boarded his vessel: "Your task will be difficult. It isn't easy, you know, to govern Egypt..." (Stephens 1971, 108).

American media fell in love with Nasser. By May 1953, "Time magazine presented Nasser as the leader of the new Egyptian regime" even though Naguib officially remained the Premier until late 1954 (McAlexander 2011, 367). 1953 also saw a shift in U.S. leadership as Dwight D. Eisenhower took office January 20. With Ike came a new agenda for the Middle East, one that "address[ed] Arab concerns" as well as Israeli's (Little 2008, 89). By his side stood John Foster Dulles who Little (2008) describes as "a cagey corporate lawyer whose vision of the United States as God's American Israel rivaled that of the Puritans" (89). He considered Communism as an international evil and viewed neutral countries in the fight as accessories to this evil (Oren 2007, 510). Winston Churchill once said that "Foster Dulles is the only case I know of a bull who carries his china shop with him" (Neff 1981, 39). Although many believed Eisenhower allowed Dulles to roam free on international issues, he in actuality headed the major issues and crises during his presidency. A strong supporter of Israel at its beginning, by the time Dulles took office as the Secretary of State, he believed the Truman administration went too far in their favor of the country (Neff 1981, 43). Dulles applauded the Israelis for their manifest destiny attitude and their antagonism to communism; however, he did not appreciate their irreconcilable position toward the Arabs nor their flagrant meddling in U.S. politics through interest groups (Little 2008, 89). Dulles agreed with Eisenhower that the United States should bypass the precedent set by

Truman. He was convinced that peace in the Middle East depended on America's ability to remain impartial in the conflict.

The Baghdad Pact (1953-1954)

May 9, 1953 Dulles took a trip to the Middle East to address the four major issues the region presented: security of the area from the Soviets, question of how to protect the independence of states newly in post-colonial positions, economic development, and the Arab Israeli conflict (Beal 2007, 248). He discovered, probably to his own surprise, that Arabs "were more fearful of Zionism than of the Communists" (Neff 1981, 43). In his report, he noted the Arab's belief that the U.S. would assist Israel in its expansion into other Arab lands. Ever since the 1948 War, popularity of America in Arab countries decreased (Neff 1981, 43). Skepticism on behalf of the Arabs could only be expected. From their perspective, the U.S. assisted with Israel's creation within the U.N. and then proudly boasted of the speed to which they recognized the state. This trip only served to further prove to Dulles of the necessity of the United States' impartiality. While Dulles observed and briefly acknowledged this regional concern, as the Secretary of State to the United States at this time, Dulles's top priority was containment. The secretary of state mainly reported on the concern of the 'northern tier' states, those that bordered Russia, of Russian aggression (Beal 2007, 248). Their fear inspired him to create the idea of a military alliance that would fight against the spread of communism and Soviet encroachment. Previous attempts at such a feat failed due to the starkly negative reaction from Egypt. When Dulles visited Egypt during his 1953 tour, Nasser told him that these alliances were unpopular with the nationalists and would prove "self-defeating" as they "would only weaken the Arab governments and help the Communists" (Stephens 1971, 145).

This new venture began with Pakistan and Turkey in April 1954. When Iraq joined a year later, the alliance was named the 'Baghdad Pact' (Beal 2007, 249). Britain and Iran also followed shortly after. Just as before, Egypt objected. Nasser told the C.I.A.'s liaison, Miles Copeland, that the West wanted "to get [the Arabs] to unite to fight *your* enemy [Russia] while they know that if they show any intention of fighting *their* enemy [Israel] you would quickly stop all aid" (Neff 1981, 76). Iraq's admittance to this alliance only further antagonized Nasser who viewed Iraq as attempting to overtake Egypt as the region's leading country. The fact that the United States did not even belong to this pact that Dulles proposed did not deter the Egyptian from placing blame on the superpower. A large part of the U.S.'s decision went back to Dulles' first conclusion from his 1953 report: Eisenhower's administration was exerting real efforts to remain impartial in the Arab Israeli conflict. Israel objected to the Pact; they viewed this as Arab unity that threatened their security (Beal 2007, 250; Neff 1981, 153). Eisenhower's attempts to remain neutral in the issue would continue to upset both sides throughout his presidency. According to Stephens (1971), Britain and the United States were "obsessed" with the formation of these military alliances, not realizing that the nationalist Arab sentiment regarded them more dangerous than Russia or Communism 143).

The Czech Arms Deal (1955)

A more tangible arena in which Eisenhower fought to remain neutral in the Arab Israeli issue was that of arms and countries' requests to the United States for supplying the weapons.

Eisenhower staunchly opposed becoming the main supplier of arms to the region. How could he remain impartial if he were to begin that kind of relationship with either side? America depended on foreign oil, and selling arms to the Israelis would certainly hold dire economic consequences.

If the U.S. sold to the Arabs, the powerful Jewish lobbies would no doubt exert their political power. The solution: “he let the British do it” (Neff 1981, 37). Eisenhower felt pressure to not supply arms through his own goals of neutrality but also by the Tripartite Declaration of 1950. In this the United States, Britain, and France promised to retain the power balance in the Middle East by limiting their arms sales to the Israelis and the Arabs. However, pressure on Egypt was mounting. Economic aid from the West depended on its participation in the unpopular Baghdad Pact and the highly conservative leadership of Ben Gurion in Israel stirred Egypt’s masses. The people expected Nasser to act. An Israeli raid on Gaza proved the breaking point of their patience. It was the bloodiest exchange between Egypt and Israel since the 1948 war (Neff 1981, 33). Eisenhower quickly joined Britain and France for condemning the action, siding with the Arabs in this instance. After the raid though, Nasser was forced to act. Nasser sent a request to Washington for arms, a gesture, Lenczowski (1971) argues, that showed Nasser’s good faith in the Egyptian-American relationship (78). Eisenhower stalled on the shipments of arms he originally promised to Egypt in the face of political pressure not only from Israel but also from its ally, Britain. Great Britain still maintained a sizable presence in Egypt and knew that any weapons the U.S. sent could be used against its own citizens. Weighing the costs, Eisenhower planned to continue stalling on the shipment, believing that its ally was more important than Egypt in the grand picture of the fight against Communism (Neff 1981, 71). If the West would not provide Egypt with arms, the only other viable option was the East. Nasser even told Henry Byroade, the U.S. ambassador in Cairo, in June that if he could not get arms from the United States, he would get them from Russia (Stephens 1971, 159). On September 27, 1955 Egypt announced their cotton-for-arms deal with Czechoslovakia (Lenczowski 1971, 79). Divine (1981) saw Nasser’s request to the Soviet bloc as retaliation for the creation of the Baghdad Pact

(80). Lenczowski (1971), on the other hand, saw Nasser's decision more as an American-Egyptian "estrangement" rather than an actual preference for Soviet friendship or business partnership (81). Despite Nasser's claims of the weapons solely defensive purpose, the deal crushed the Tripartite Declaration. Israel began haranguing the U.S. for arms to offset the new imbalance. However, the State Department would not budge. They feared an arms race would inevitably ensue (Beal 2007, 254). Even the media predicted such, stating "a build-up for war appears to be in full swing in the Middle East . . . Anything can happen" (McAlexander 2011, 368). Dulles viewed the deal as the common game third world states played, trying to pit the superpowers against one another in an effort to get the best deal for themselves. Eisenhower mirrored this sentiment in his memoirs, stating that it seemed "suspiciously like blackmail," adding that "our attitude may, with the advantage of hindsight, appear to have been unrealistic" (Neff 1981, 80). Estes Kefauver, a Democratic senator from Tennessee claimed the arms deal was a turning point in the Middle East. He declared that the "chief target of the new Communist-equipped Egyptian military machine is the democratic state of Israel" (McAlexander 2011, 370). This was only the beginning of a mindset that would endure not only the full length of Nasser's presidency but also remain throughout the 'us-versus-them' mindset of the Cold War. With the Soviets in the Middle East, Eisenhower could no longer give minimal attention to the region.

The Aswan Dam (1955-1956)

The U.S. originally saw Nasser as a man who genuinely cared about improving life in Egypt and developing the country, an Egyptian Atatürk. However, after the Czech arms deal, the analogy faded away in favor of a comparison to Hitler (McAlexander 2011, 364). This comparison grew in use particularly after Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal later in 1956. Divine (1981) argues

that the United States realized their error in trying to force Egypt's hand in the Baghdad Pact, opening up the region to Soviet penetration. In an effort to warm their relationship with Nasser, they along with the British began negotiations for assisting Nasser financially with his Aswan Dam project (Divine 1981, 80; Neff 1981, 125; Stephens 1971, 161-162). The idea of assisting his project was far more welcomed than supplying him with arms. However, a more sanguine argument holds that with the U.S. perception of Nasser as a modernist, the West offered to assist Nasser's project because of the good it would do for the country (Beal 2007, 255). Egypt's population was growing faster than its growth in agricultural production. Controlling the Nile offered a solution to produce more food (Neff 1981, 124). Still others contend that the dam project was part of a larger effort to force Egypt and Israel to reconcile with each other through economic and aid incentives (Neff 1981, 123). The actuality of the West's decision to help fund the project most likely had more to do with all three positions than any one of them individually.

The agreement of the funding for the Aswan Dam included the United States, Britain, and the World Bank. The U.S. and Britain would together provide \$200 million to match the bank's funding; Egypt could then pay the rest with local currency (Neff 1981, 129). From the West's perspective, they were assisting Egypt despite Nasser's flirtations with communism. Nasser, however, did not hold this view. Within the agreement came stipulations from the World Bank that were "requirements of the World Bank designed to protect Egyptian resources and ensure the stability of the loan" (Beal 2007, 255-256). These included prohibitions from Communist aid, distributing contracts based on actual merit, and requirements on how the Egyptian government should run its finances in budgeting and balance of payments (Stephens 1971, 173). Nasser publicly accused the West of trying to weaken the Egyptian government. Both British Prime

Minister Anthony Eden and Eisenhower's governments understood Nasser's fears of becoming subject to foreign creditors. Nasser was the champion of anti-colonialism, nationalism, and pan-Arabism. He would play the East off of the West to gain a better bargain. Nasser had publicly stated that he preferred a Western loan to an Eastern one, but "he was so determined to have the dam that he would go to the Russians, his last choice, if necessary" (Neff 1981, 129). Nasser applied pressure by hinting to a Russian offer, one that when announced publicly in January met no Soviet contradiction. Now the fears of Soviet penetration in the Middle East appeared very much real. From within the Soviet Union Khrushchev and Bulganin altered the objectives of the country which greatly concerned Eisenhower. Turning from Stalin's steadfast policies, America's enemy openly competed for the favor of third world countries (Lenczowski 1971, 78; Neff 1981, 127). Khrushchev reportedly stated in Bhakra on November 22:

Perhaps you [the United States] would like to compete with us in establishing friendship with the Indians? Let us compete. Why have we come here? We come with an open heart and with honest intentions. You [India] want to build factories? Perhaps you have not sufficient experience? Then apply to us and we shall help you (Neff 1981, 127).

Eden met with Eisenhower in Washington a month later, "they agreed that Nasser's attitude towards the High Dam offer would be an important indicator of the prospects for his cooperation with the West" (Stephens 1971, 172). The greatest undertone throughout this process was the problem of Nasser's 'neutrality.' For Dulles, the issue of neutrality was one of morality (Khalidi 2009, 181; Stephens 1971, 162). During Eden's trip to Washington, both sides expressed their distaste of the growing trend of newly independent countries remaining neutral in the Cold War. Dulles stated "We must be more vigorous than we have been in combating the idea of neutralism... These neutral governments do not seem to realize that the Communist intentions are

so diabolical and so hostile to their freedom and independence” (Neff 1981, 150). Neutralism in this instance refers to abstaining from becoming close to either the ideals of the Western capitalism or Eastern Communism. However, for Nasser and the Middle East, these did not appear as the only solutions. Nasser, the father of pan-Arabism saw his neutrality as a natural third and better choice for Egypt, one of independence from super power meddling. Political writings from authors such as al-‘Azm’s *Mudhakkirat* revealed how the West’s war against Communism also saw an enemy in the idea of pan-Arabism (Citino 2012, 90). Thus did the United States find Nasser’s disposition threatening.

The election season of 1956 unfortunately or auspiciously occupied the United States. Eisenhower was undergoing many health problems and originally debated back and forth as to whether or not he should run for a second term. Foreign policies dominated many of the electoral discussions. Democrats pushed for better relations with Israel, to increase their sales of arms to the country. They even argued, echoing Senator Estes Kefauver, that doing so would help in the fight against Communism (Neff 1981, 156). Neff (1981) argues that such a connection was borderline ridiculous and in many ways the opposite of reality. He proposed that Israel’s “refusal to define the limits of its state were major contributory causes of the arms race and the Soviet Union’s entry into the Middle East” (157). While Israel could count on the Democrats to fight for them, there was no equivalent counterpart for the Arabs. In fact, anti-Egypt sentiment was spreading throughout America. Cold warriors were wary of Nasser for his friendly disposition towards the Soviets, southern cotton farmers did not appreciate the competition, and of course the liberals pushed for greater support of Israel (Neff 1981, 199). Eisenhower, still true to his goals of impartiality, understood the support Israel found in the U.S., but he also knew how

much Europe depended on Middle Eastern oil. Eisenhower and Dulles both agreed upon a tactic of isolating Nasser from all other countries except the Soviet Union so that “Egyptians would grow tired of it and return to the West of their own accord” (Neff 1981, 197). Such a belief echoes the president’s sentiment when he responded to the Soviet strategy of offering economic assistance to hatchling countries. Expounding on the freedoms and virtues of capitalism, he stated that “at first glance, it would appear that we are being challenged in the area of our greatest strength” (Neff 1981, 128).

Other events distracted President Eisenhower from the issues in the Middle East. U.S. intelligence found evidence of Khrushchev’s delivery essentially of an anti-Stalin speech at the Twentieth Communist Party Congress (Neff 1981, 245). One must keep in mind that the president’s first and foremost priority was Moscow. Such news meaningfully communicated that the ideals and probably tactics of the Soviet Union were also changing. During this same spring, Eisenhower underwent a second bout with his illness, not only distracting him from issues around the world but also from his reelection campaign.

Eisenhower and Dulles, with the cooperation of Britain, put into motion their plan to isolate Nasser. This included actions of continued refusal to sell arms to Egypt, eliminating offered aid, and delaying negotiations on the Aswan Dam (Neff 1981, 211). Later, it would expand to include increasing U.S. relations with other countries in the region such as Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Saudi Arabia and Syria (Neff 1981, 263). By doing so, they attempted to prove to Nasser and the world that the leader would not succeed in trying to take advantage of the West. However, a series of unpredicted events took place which altered the game considerably. Israel mounted an attack on

Gaza, killing sixty-two and wounding 107, a fair portion of them being women and children (Neff 1981, 219). Domestic pressure on Nasser climbed. The continued delay on the high dam along with the pressure to protect his country from Israeli attacks pushed him to make a decision. U.S. ambassador Hank Byroade reported: “Nasser soon must take vigorous steps to meet domestic problems with the High Dam as primary effort” (Neff 1981, 245). In addition to this, Nasser retaliated to a U.S. approved French delivery of Mystere jet fighters to Israel by officially recognizing the Chinese Soviet Republic on May 16 and withdrawing its recognition of Formosa, present-day Taiwan (Beal 2007, 257; Stephens 1971, 183). Dulles was outraged, even going so far as to understand the move as illustrative of Nasser’s departure from the leader’s original goals of state-building (Beal 2007, 257; Divine 1981, 81). Nasser was becoming difficult to control. The list of his errors rose too high: his refusal to enter into the Baghdad Pact or any other military alliance against Communism, his lack of sincerity in finding a peaceful solution with Israel, and now the recognition of another third-world Communist country (Neff 1981, 253; Oren 2007, 515). Neff (1981) posits that Nasser did not have much of a choice on this final issue. The U.S.S.R., Britain, and France all commented publicly on an arms embargo on the Middle East (254). Although Chinese weapons were not a superior or preferred choice, it at least ensured that Nasser would have to beg arms from the United States.

The U.S.’s next move acted as a catalyst that tipped the first domino that led to the Suez War. Ambassador Hussein of Egypt returned to Washington to inform Eisenhower that Nasser accepted the West’s offer for financing the dam and that Nasser dropped all objections to the terms (Beal 2007, 259). However, Egypt was too late. Beal (2007) argues that Washington assumed by Nasser’s previous actions that he no longer wanted the deal and therefore determined

to silently take it off the table. When Nasser turned around and attempted to accept the assistance, he forced Eisenhower to declare that the offer was no longer available (Beal 2007, 260). However, the official reasons for withdrawing the offer were twofold. Egypt failed to procure an agreement with the other countries and rural regions that depend on the Nile waters and gave the West the impression that the country did not adequately prepare local resources for the project (Stephens 1971, 193). Although these were necessary measure that the United States did not feel Egypt met, the general impression given was the superpower's lack of trust in Egypt's economy. Apart from that, how could the U.S. help such a leader? Such an action would appear as a reward for all of Nasser's egregious flirtations with the Soviet Union. Neff (1981) even contends that Washington used the denial as a "public slap," to let Nasser know that he went too far with his dealing with communists (257). Just as one might expect, the Russians came out with their counter-offer to fund the dam. When Dulles consulted Eisenhower on the issue, the president stated "I have never doubted the wisdom of canceling our offer" (Hoopes 1973, 337).

The Suez War (1956-1957)

The World Bank's assistance to the construction of the Aswan Dam hinged on America's participation with the funding. Once the U.S. withdrew its offer, the World Bank and Britain quickly followed suit. Exactly one week later, on July 26, 1956, Gamal Abdel Nasser stood before a vast crowd in Alexandria and delivered his announcement of the nationalization of the Suez Canal (Adams 1958, 1-4; Divine 1981, 81; Neff 1981, 271):

الاستعمار عايز ان احنا نكون تابعين، وحينما يأمر نلبى أى أمر... كانوا عايزين مننا طبعاً ان احنا نسلم لإسرائيل بكل شىء، ونهمل حقوق عرب فلسطين ولا نتجه إليها، وعايزين مننا طبعاً ان احنا نتنكر لإخواننا فى شمال إفريقيا، ويمكن أكثر من كده عايزينا نوافق زى مجلس الأمن ما وافق... مجلس الأمن من أسبوعين - اللى بتسيطر عليه هذه الدول الكبرى - وافق

واعترف، وأقر قيام المذابح والمقصلة في الجزائر؛ لأنه رفض انه يناقش موضوع الجزائر في مجلس الأمن؛ كانوا عايزينا نتبع هذه الطريقة ونتبع هذا الأسلوب... عايزينا "ننفذ السياسة التي تملى علينا..."

احنا لن نكرر الماضي أبداً، ولكن سنقضى على الماضي؛ سنقضى على الماضي بإننا نستعيد حقوقنا في قنال السويس... حنبني السد العالي، وسنحصل على حقوقنا المغتصبة... حنبني السد العالي زى ما احنا عايزين، حنصمم على هذا... ٣٥ مليون جنيه كل سنة بتاخدها شركة القنال... هذا قد وقعت اليوم، ووافقت الحكومة على القانون الآتي: قرار من رئيس الجمهورية بتأميم الشركة العالمية لقنال السويس البحرية.

"The imperialists want us to be their dependents and when they issue an order to respond to it... They want us to give in to Israel on all points and forsake Palestine and our brothers in North Africa and to agree as the Security Council agreed, to the slaughter in Algeria. They want us to execute the policy dictated to us. Egypt has refused to do this and wants to have an independent personality..."

"We shall never repeat the past, but we shall eliminate the past. We shall eliminate the past by regaining our rights to the Suez Canal... We shall build the High Dam and we shall obtain our usurped right. We shall build the High Dam as we desire. We are determined. Thirty-five million pounds annually is taken by the canal company. Why not take it for ourselves? Therefore, I have signed today and the government has approved the following: a resolution adopted by the president of the republic for the nationalization of the world company of the Suez Canal"

(The speech given by President Gamal Abdel Nasser in Alexandria on the 4th anniversary of the Revolution Nationalizing the Suez Canal).

By doing so, Nasser found a legal solution to declare his independence from the West. He would use the income from the tolls on the canal to fund the Aswan Dam project himself. The matter did not overly concern the U.S. whose use of the canal came to 2.7%, but the French and Britain constituted two-thirds of the canal's usage (Neff 1981, 281). The European preference for the Suez Canal derived from its convenience relative to having to go around the southern tip of Africa for trading with India as illustrated by Figure 1.



Figure 1

The Suez Canal
(<http://geography.howstuffworks.com/africa/the-suez-canal.htm/printable>)

Both European countries were outraged. Eden likened the Egyptian to Hitler, and even Eisenhower later admitted the similarities between Nasser's ambitions and Hitler's from *Mein Kampf* (Adams 1958, 73; Divine 1981, 81; Neff 1981, 276 & 292). The more militant reaction though came from Paris. Nasser's ideas of pan-Arabism and independence galvanized the Algerians who fought the French for their independence of colonial rule. Both countries believed that Nasser had to be removed from power in Egypt. Eisenhower sat opposite his two allies. In a press conference on August 8, Eisenhower admitted that he could not see military force as a viable solution to this crisis (Divine 1981, 82). Acutely aware of the need for the canal for all of Western Europe for the transport of oil, the president thought that if the Egyptians could continue running the canal smoothly then a peaceful solution was possible (Beal 2007, 264; Stephens 1971, 204). Eisenhower had the unique experience of the Panama Canal and believed that operation of such an important waterway would not be as difficult as Britain and France believed (Stephens 1971, 205). Although the United States did not directly depend on the canal, America's survival depended on it through the fate of Europe's economy. If the European economy collapsed, Eisenhower wrote in his diary, "the United States would be in a situation of which the difficulty could scarcely be exaggerated" (Neff 1981, 282). Israel did not oppose the action of nationalizing the canal, but the implications behind it disturbed Ben Gurion. He stated that it "represented a new and alarming stage in the development of Nasser's arrogant self-confidence which had been fortified in proportion to his buildup of Communist arms" (Gurion 1963, 104). At this point it seems apparent that Israel shared the view of many of its liberal supporters in the United States that they stood as the bulwark against Egypt's imminent alliance with the Soviet Union. Although many signs pointed to the benefits of a military intervention, still stronger forces pulled the U.S. president into the uncomfortable situation of sitting opposite

his two closest allies. Eisenhower's motives stemmed from his fear of upsetting the Arabs. Nasser's ideology for united Arabs, independent of foreign control, appealed to leaders of many other countries in the Middle East. Adams (1958), a British reporter present for the speech in Alexandria reported that there was no doubt that support for Nasser increased after his declaration, bringing the Arab world closer together (9 & 18). Even Saudi Arabia and Jordan, close U.S. allies, sent letters of support to Nasser at this time (Heikal 1987, 155-159). Going to war with Egypt for the purpose of overthrowing this prominent figure could not only send the Arabs running to the U.S.S.R. for help but also endanger the West's access to oil which could also sink Europe's economy (Divine 1981, 82). Nasser reiterated many times that the canal would continue to operate smoothly and fairly. The only change was a lack of foreign control over the Egyptian waterway. On a trip to the canal after its seizure, Adams (1958) could only confirm that it was indeed still running just as before (9). Dulles interpreted Nasser's assurance as a reactionary patch to the violent backlash from Europe (Beal 2007, 266). Even if this were the case, throughout the crisis Nasser maintained a stance of a man asking "What's all the shouting about? Your ships are going through, aren't they?" (Beal 2007, 269).

Washington stood opposite London and Paris. However, America did not make this clear until a press conference nearly a month after the seizure. Dulles wanted to temper its allies while also exerting pressure on Nasser during the negotiations (Stephens 1971, 205). The U.S. froze all Egyptian assets, but "that was as far as Eisenhower was willing to go" (Neff 1981, 288). The pressure to side with his allies must have been enormous on Eisenhower. The Second World War ended about ten years beforehand and once again these three countries stood side by side to face a great threat. However, in this crisis, Eisenhower chose to side with American ideology of

freedom rather than arguably America's best interests. Though he feared an Arab reprisal, removing a communist-friendly regime from power in favor of a pro-Western one could have large benefits in the long run. However, after Eden made his statements concerning his plans for future hostilities against Egypt, Eisenhower stated his regret at having to make such a decision but said that "in taking our own position we were standing firmly on principle and on the realities of the twentieth century" (Neff 1981, 286). Now he and Dulles had to act; they attempted to stall their allies through the U.N. in an attempt to dissuade them from war. At a conference held in London early that August, that Moscow and Egypt refused to attend, Dulles proposed the creation of the Cooperative Association of Suez Canal Users (C.A.S.U.), an organization to share the canal between the countries that used the waterway. This association would deal with operational and managerial tasks of the canal such as hiring pilots, maintenance, and distributing to Egypt "a fair proportion of the tolls as a sort of rental" (Beal 2007, 267). Eden interpreted this to grant the countries the right to intercede if Egypt refused to participate. However, the proposal more acted as an official acknowledgement that if Egypt failed to operate the canal efficiently, the world would hold him accountable. Even Dulles admitted that the new association "would have no meaningful powers" (Neff 1981, 319). The meeting in London followed by the proposition of C.A.S.U. led to an outraged reaction from Moscow. The U.S.S.R. even threatened war if the association attempted to impose itself on the canal (Neff 1981, 318).

As the crisis progressed and the U.S. continued to oppose the British and the French, world opinion of John Foster Dulles began to improve. A man world renowned as a cold warrior, Dulles became a perceived champion of peace in Europe. The August 24 edition of the New York Times discussed this shift and the secretary of state's new position as "a restraining

influence” (Neff 1981, 299). However, his success in diverting America’s allies was hindered by their lack of communication with Washington. Dulles admitted to Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson that he did not know what the British and French were up to. “They are not very forthcoming in keeping us informed” (Neff 1981, 326). Dulles and Eisenhower did not believe the British and French would be unsuccessful in any attempt to take back the canal, but they did not believe that this course of action would deliver the British and French goal of removing Nasser from power (Beal 2007, 275). The resulting political consequences, they argued, would be disastrous to the Allied cause. Echoing France’s contemporary foreign policy nightmare in Algeria, Eisenhower argued that their current schemes would only result in a similar situation. At this same time, Israel was undergoing a military buildup, moving their men close to Jordanian borders. Dulles questioned the purpose of this decision. He knew that Hussein’s monarchy was unstable with a high possibility of being overtaken by Palestinians and pro-Nasser students (Tyler 2009, 22). Israel lied to the U.S., stating that these measures were for defensive purposes when in fact, Dulles would soon learn the whole thing proved a charade. Israel would not attack Jordan but Egypt on behalf of the British and French.

Eastern Europe held its own surprises that fall. On October 19, mass anti-Soviet protests broke out in Poland and then in Hungary the following day (Neff 1981, 341). They proved large enough that Khrushchev gathered Soviet forces along the Polish border. Despite the previously uncovered information Eisenhower and Dulles gathered about the change in Soviet leadership, this occurrence in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union’s response seemed to prove the two’s comments about the sustained tyrannical dogma of Communism. The news excited Dulles exceedingly, who believed that this showed the beginning of the end of the Soviet Union (Neff

1981, 386). The protests opened an incredible opportunity to strike a political blow to the Eastern bloc. From Washington's viewpoint however, the British, French, and Israelis would destroy this chance with the Suez crisis. On October 25, Washington received reports of Israeli military mobilization (Beal 2007, 276-277). Within the week, Israel attacked Gaza. Along with this news came the announcement that the British and French, in order to ensure the safety of the canal, sent forces to secure Port Said, Ismailia and the Suez (Beal 2007, 280). Since Israel struck Egypt as part of a secret plan made with France, Israel had no intention of ceasing its attacks, thus ensuring the "need" for the two European countries to go into Egypt and take the canal by force. This plan, unbeknownst to Eisenhower at the time, revealed itself merely through the observation of the serendipitous nature of the events. Dulles asked the British and French foreign diplomats about the matter and attempted to impress on them how much these actions tarnished the Allies' ability to condemn the Soviet handling of the events in Eastern Europe (Neff 1981, 362). In a conversation with the president, he said that their allies' actions "obscured in the eyes of the world the differences between the two systems" (Neff 1981, 388). Immediately, the President informed the British of the U.S.'s position. Just as Eisenhower stated before the Israelis attacked, the United States could not stand with the British in the taking of the Suez: "I cannot conceive that the United States would gain if we permitted it to be justly said that we are a nation without honor...I don't fancy helping the Egyptians but I feel our word must be made good" (Neff 1981, 366). Here again history shows another example of Eisenhower's struggle between a choice to assist its own Allied cause or stand firm in its own projected ideology. As for the Israelis, Eisenhower instructed Dulles to tell them that "goddam it, we're going to apply sanctions, we're going to the United Nations, we're going to do everything that there is so we can stop this thing" (Divine 1981, 85). On October 30, Lodge, the U.S. ambassador to the UN, introduced a

resolution for both Israel and Egypt to stop all armed conflict and for member states to not interfere in the crisis. For the first time in Security Council history, Britain and France vetoed this U.S. resolution (Beal 2007, 280; Neff 1981, 377-378). As much as Washington warned the British, Eden ignored Eisenhower's advice and began bombing Egyptian bases the next day. This resulted in a "tongue-lashing" phone call from Eisenhower that left the prime minister "in tears" (Divine 1981, 85). That same day Eisenhower addressed his constituents regarding America's position on the issue: "There can be no peace without law. And there can be no law if we work to invoke one code of international conduct for those we oppose, and another for our friends" (Beal 2007, 281).

The larger problem in the Suez Crisis for Eisenhower lay in the world's perception of it in relation to the Eastern bloc as well as the ever-constant fear of the U.S.S.R. getting involved in direct opposition to a main Allied power. In a long note to Eden, Eisenhower reminded the British leader that if the United Nations finds Israel the aggressor in this conflict, Egypt would be well founded in asking the Soviets for help; the situation could escalate into a far more concerning matter (Neff 1981, 373). The Israeli attack on Egypt surprised even the Soviets, and although they found Egypt a worthy enough ally to assist, a military option for support did not exist, leaving only the alternative to rally world opinion in Egypt's favor (Heikal 1987, 192-193). However, this information was naturally not broadcasted to the world. Once the fear of Soviet intervention became real for Eisenhower, he believed the U.S. "had to step in, to counter the weight of the Soviet power" (Divine 1981, 79). Dulles did not want this opportunity to go to the Soviets much as how the situation with Poland and Hungary slipped through the Allies' fingers. However unfortunate the events in Eastern Europe were, they were nothing compared to the

severity of the Suez Crisis (Neff 1981, 401). America had to take control of the situation. Dulles declared that the U.S. must stand up as a leader in this crisis and in so doing distance itself from the colonialist tendencies of its allies (Neff 1981, 390). The president feared a volunteer situation like the Chinese in the Korean War and did not wish to see this issue intensify (Beal 2007, 263). Most importantly to Eisenhower for the Middle East, America could not economically afford to allow favor of the Arabs to go to the Soviets. He saw the transportation and production of Middle Eastern oil as crucial in the plan for defense and victory in the Cold War (Divine 1981, 79). Just as Eisenhower had warned, international condemnation focused on the Western powers in the Suez crisis instead of the situation in Eastern Europe. Marshal Nikolai Bulganin sent messages to London and Paris on November 5 condemning their attacks and threatening retaliation if their assailments continued (Divine 1981, 86).

Those early days in November also coincided with a number of other important events. November 5 also harmonized with election eve in America, most likely a distracting reality for the U.S. president. Also, the day before Bulganin's messages were sent, a resolution calling for a forced cease-fire in compliance with the previous U.S. resolution passed 59 to 5 just as the Anglo-French forces made their way to the Egyptian coast (Beal 2007, 286; Neff 1981, 392). Nasser immediately accepted the cease-fire which put the British and French in an uncomfortable situation (Neff 1981, 396). Their official reason for military action was as an interventionist measure to protect the canal. Since Egypt agreed to end hostilities, there was no need to 'police' the Egyptian ports. Similarly uncomfortable for the United States, Premier Bulganin of the U.S.S.R. sent President Eisenhower a letter suggesting the two countries stand together against the British and French (Beal 2007, 286; Divine 1981, 87; Neff 1981, 403).

Outraged, Eisenhower spent no time in answering Bulganin, warning an American reprisal if they attacked its allies. Such a combination of forces would prove unnecessary as Eden, probably grudgingly, accepted the cease-fire on the morning of November 6, election-day in America (Divine 1981, 88). Although the conflict appeared over for much of the world, Israel remained in the recently gained territories until its slow withdrawal process began December 2 though with the exception of the Gaza Strip (Neff 1981, 431). On February 15, 1957, Adams (1958) reported that Dulles fell back into disfavor with the Egyptians during the secretary of state's negotiations with the Israelis over their withdrawal from Gaza and the Gulf of Aqaba (121). A local Egyptian newspaper, *El Gumhuria* الجمهورية, said that it was "a flagrant violation of the principles of international law as well as of all accepted moral and equitable rules" (Adams 1958, 121). Adams (1958) goes on to observe that the West, including the United States, would continue to be looked on as Israel's protective parent, implying that all actions by the country for an Arab one will be looked on with mistrust (131).

As the smoke cleared from the Suez Crisis, international opinion was clear: world opinion turned against Britain and France for their military intervention while Soviet prestige rose as it became perceived as Egypt's protector (Divine 1981, 88). Eisenhower's staunch opposition in the affair from the beginning also earned him great respect. As reported by the November 17th New York Times article on Nasser, the Egyptian's popularity likewise soared in wake of this political 'victory' (Neff 1981, 422). However, all of these apparent victors also suffered debilitating losses. Israel trounced Nasser's army, and the canal suffered economic loss as a result. The Russians remained tentative in the face of their proxy's nationalism. Peter Lyon argues that only Eisenhower, who increased America's prestige and assured its dominance as the only Western

country with influence in the Middle East, came out as a true victor (Divine 1981, 96). Looking back, Dulles confirms that although America had to oppose its allies, the alternative would have invariably led to another world war with nuclear implications (Beal 2007, 288). Despite the implications of choices not made, the Suez Crisis held vast consequences for the world and marked a turning point in the Cold War and in the Middle East. It denoted the end of French and British colonialism in the region and signaled the beginning of a new era of U.S. dominance there. However, the Soviet presence also became secured. The pro-Western monarchy in Iraq fell the following year, and it along with Syria and Libya followed Nasser's example of going to the Soviets for arms (Neff 1981, 483). Among Eisenhower's objectives before the crisis was the goal to prevent such penetration. However, Stephens (1971) argues that the crisis occurred in the first place because of the U.S. withdrawal of aid for the Aswan Dam, an attempt to curb Soviet influence by punishing the Communist-friendly Nasser (254). Although Eisenhower's popularity was never higher in the Middle East, Neff (1981) concludes that he never took advantage of this new position. When Nasser requested food and aid as war compensation, Eisenhower refused (Neff 1981, 441). Many in America still held Nasser in contempt for fraternizing with Communism and posing a threat to Israel, and Neff (1981) observes this as a missed opportunity based on the country's own prejudices.

The Eisenhower Doctrine (1957)

The end of the Suez Crisis and the beginning of 1957 marked a new era in the Middle East. European colonialism was no longer the tune of the day, and Eisenhower worried that the power vacuum would be filled by the Russians. Eisenhower told Congress in an address on January 5 that the United States must be the one to fill this vacuum (Stephens 1971, 255). He proposed an

initiative with two main goals: to help the countries of the Middle East economically and to use American forces to protect these countries when they ask for it from “any action controlled by international communism” (Modern History Sourcebook). The wording in the proposal which became known as the Eisenhower Doctrine is significant. The U.S. would not assist countries unless they “desired and deserved” such aid (Modern History Sourcebook). And since it stipulated aid only from “international communism,” the U.S. would not be expected to assist in regional conflicts, namely between Israel and Arabs. As if learning from the mistakes of the Baghdad Pact, the proposal recognized states’ neutrality, but they still had to have an un-neutral disposition towards “international communism” (Stephens 1971, 256). While at the forefront the Doctrine appeared to have good intentions, many saw its true purpose the same as the Baghdad Pact’s: an attempt to pull Arab support towards America in the Cold War. The concept that the power vacuum needed an outside force to fill it insulted Nasser. He believed that Arabs should fill this new role vacated by the British and French (Adams 1958, 93; Stephens 1971, 257-258). Whatever Eisenhower truly had in mind for the Doctrine, the consequences of it were certainly unintended. The Arabs remained wary of the new doctrine, worried it was a new form of colonialism. Adams (1958) documented a local newspaper, *El Siyassah* السياسة, depicting a political cartoon of the U.S riding into the Middle Eastern compound on a Trojan horse, the Eisenhower Doctrine (101).

To counter the Americans, the Russians also initiated plans of economic assistance to the Arabs, but unlike the Americans, they did so without pacts or agreements. Logically, it follows that they found much greater success than the U.S. in the decades to come in the Middle East. While the U.S. had stood against France, Britain, and Israel, the superpower continued to freeze Egyptian

assets in its country, forcing Egyptians to receive its wheat and oil shipments from the Soviets (Stephens 1971, 257). In his description of the Doctrine and its results, Stephens (1971) argues that attempting to prevent the U.S.S.R. from becoming a part of the Middle East had little point since the superpower was already in the region at that time though without established satellites (257). He observes that in reality, the U.S. proposal did more to divide the countries of the Middle East and allow for greater Soviet penetration as inter-regional conflicts claimed one side or another in the Cold War in attempts to use the United States' and Soviet Union's abilities to fight their own internal Arab opponents (256). Adams (1958) confirms that a "tug-of-war" occurred throughout the Middle East as countries decided to accept the Doctrine or not (102). He attributes this internal bickering to be the direct result of the West assessing Arabs "on the basis of their attitude towards communism" in a way of separating "Arab sheep from Arab goats" (Adams 1958, 195). The reporter observes that while America was in a prime position at this time to finding a peaceful solution for Israel and Palestine, the Eisenhower Doctrine dropped the U.S. from its high position among Arabs for standing up for them against Israel (Adams 1958, 109). Just as with the Baghdad Pact, the Eisenhower Doctrine assumed that the Arabs were just as concerned about the Cold War and the threat of Communism as the United States. However, to them, Israel remained their main enemy and concern. During this time, Dulles continued to negotiate the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza. His attempts to please both sides and his failure to get the withdrawal only seemed to confirm the Arab attitude that the U.S. would always be the protector of Israel (Adams 1958, 121 & 164).

Eisenhower continued to show an unfortunate flair for bad timing. On March 25 word reached the Middle East that the United States at last joined the Baghdad Pact (Adams 1958, 156). This

summarily confirmed to the Arabs the true intentions of the Doctrine and only served to damn it in their eyes. The local Egyptian newspaper of *El Masaa*, *المساء*, wrote that the action “made abundantly clear that the Eisenhower Doctrine is but a supplement of the Bagdad Pact” (Adams 1958, 157). However, as Adams (1958) speculated, this move illustrated Dulles’s new policy toward Nasser, who was sure to be upset by the action (156). Eisenhower and Dulles appeared to follow through with their plans from before the Suez Crisis of isolating Egypt and now Syria from the rest of the Middle East. They did not have to wait long to see results. Other Arab countries began to resent Nasser for his claims as the voice of the Arab world. The Egyptian began losing his grip once Saudi Arabia, after sending an envoy to Washington, approved the Eisenhower Doctrine. The Holy Muslim monarchy also lent Jordan its support, enabling King Hussein to assert Jordan’s independence of Egypt. Likewise, Egyptian newspapers were banned in Lebanon (Adams 1958, 187). Adams (1958) recalls that a year beforehand, almost all Arabs looked to Nasser for direction, but by May of 1957, most distanced themselves from the man.

CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

The Baghdad Pact (1953-1954)

The Baghdad Pact, originally conceived by John Foster Dulles, was best known among the military alliance efforts by the Western powers against Soviet penetration in the Middle East. It fell among the first policies they instituted in the region after World War II. The region proved vitally important, as mentioned in Chapter II, for its oil wealth that the West depended on. From the war, the United States and Western Europe learned just how pressing the control of and access to oil during a military campaign could be, and they did not want to be put at a disadvantage by not having access to it. By the early 1950's, the Cold War's engines were warming up. The two sides had not quite at this point begun using proxy states to fight for their sides, but Eisenhower knew that the continued supply of oil would be vital to the Western cause. Thus did the Middle East show itself to be an especially important region in the world.

At this point the Western powers had an advantage: International Communism had not yet extended its influence into the region. Dulles's priority, therefore, was containment (Neff , 43). Eisenhower and Dulles truly believed that their efforts to prevent Soviet penetration in the Middle East were in the best interests of the countries themselves, to protect them from the tyranny of Communism. They saw the Soviet Union not only as their great enemy but also as the enemy of all non-communist governments in the world. Although Dulles's trip to the region opened his eyes to the Arab fears of Zionist aggression, he believed this could be tempered by the U.S.'s stance of neutrality between the two groups. Washington failed to grasp just how

important the issue of Israel and Palestine was to the rest of the Arabs. Nasser, who served as the spokesman for most of the Middle East, expressed his outrage and anger at the Baghdad Pact not necessarily because he had Communist sympathies but because the Pact did not provide any incentive to most of the people of the Middle East. From his perspective, the U.S. wanted Middle Eastern countries to fight the West's enemy [Soviet Russia] without assisting them in fighting their enemy [Israel] and probably to the effect of actually working against them [by helping Israel] (Neff , 76). The fact that Israel also disapproved of the Pact showed the first of many examples of how Eisenhower's attempts to remain neutral ensured that both sides in the regional conflict grew angry with him. For this reason, the United States did not join the Baghdad Pact, but this did not stop Washington from encouraging all countries in the Middle East to sign it. Although Nasser warned Dulles of the assured unpopularity of the alliance among the growing nationalist groups in Arab countries and Israel herself slammed it as an unfair advantage to the Arabs, the West and the U.S. still pushed for more and more countries to join it. Why? Dulles did report of the fear the 'northern tier,' countries that bordered Russia, felt about Soviet aggression. His suggestion that these states form a military alliance might in fact been well founded and rational. However, the rest of the Middle East, a growing majority of them nationalist Arabs, saw the aggression of Israel as a far greater threat than the Soviets, and because of America's support of Israel from the onset, they saw the U.S. likewise as a greater threat than Communism. The pressure the West put on the Middle East to join the previous alliances as well as the new Baghdad Pact only served to further this belief in Nasser's mind of Western aggression. Although the U.S. never had a colony in the Middle East, its allies of France and Great Britain still held dark places in the minds of the Arabs. Arabs worried that America would follow the same example of its associates through its proxy, Israel.

By pushing for this policy while also showing the same support to Israel as to the Arabs, the United States alienated and enraged many Arab nationalists, most importantly Nasser. Their policy for containment in fact served to initiate a process that actually led to Soviet penetration in the region. By this I am not implying that the United States should have shown greater favor to the Arabs than to their ally, Israel. I argue instead that the Baghdad Pact served to show just how out of touch the West was with the political environment in the Middle East. They failed to understand the real concern of the people and chose to focus an unproportionate amount of attention to the issue of a handful of countries whose fears happened to line up with their own Cold War objectives. Dulles himself saw the concern of Zionist encroachment but instead focused America's foreign policy through the narrow lens of containment. By doing so, America did more to harm their cause of war against Communism than to promote it.

The Czech Arms Deal (1955)

Eisenhower's attempts to remain neutral in the Arab Israeli conflict are commendable. His worries about supplying arms to the two obstinately antagonistic forces were well-founded and showed foresight in trying to keep peace in the region. However, there were two great conditions that fumbled U.S. foreign policy. The first heralded back to the Baghdad Pact discussed above. Dulles made U.S. foreign relations contingent on whether or not third world countries acted in the West's favor against Communism. In this case, that meant joining the military alliance to prevent Soviet penetration in the region, a highly unpopular commitment in nationalist, anti-colonialist Egypt. As a result, economic and food aid did not become readily available to Egypt. Egypt's population was expanding rapidly, and the crops from the Nile did not produce enough substance to meet the growing demand. This was Nasser's largest motivation behind his Aswan

Dam project. At this time, Egypt depended on the U.S. to help make the difference with aid. Hence a proposition to adopt an unpopular policy with the threat of a drop in assistance did not bode well with Egyptians. The second great condition was naturally Israel. Ben Gurion's highly conservative government ruled and instilled fear in the Arabs for what he might do. The Gaza raid pushed Nasser to act, to take proactive steps to defend against his enemy. A close relationship between the United States and Israel had not been established anywhere close to the warmth it experiences today, so blaming the U.S. for the Israeli raid on Gaza would be unreasonable. One could also argue that the United States, unaccustomed to its new hegemonic position, did not feel that initiating a peace process was necessarily under their jurisdiction. Perhaps they felt that this was an internal problem and therefore they had no right to interfere with regional politics. I would argue that such a perception of the United States during this time period is simply naïve. Just two years before, in 1953, the C.I.A. under the order from Eisenhower, began a coup that overthrew the popularly elected Prime Minister of Iran, Mohammad Mossadeq, because of his perceived socialist leaning (Molavi 2002). The United States in the war against Communism had made and would go on to make questionably interfering decisions in the third world and in the Middle East. Why would they not then involve themselves in a peace process if it could solve the largest issue in the Middle East? Finding a solution, though yet unaccomplished, would have proven difficult if not impossible, but the thing to note would be the U.S.'s lack of a real effort at this time. It therefore becomes obvious that the U.S. either did not feel as if peace were feasible and did not want to waste effort or, the more likely explanation, the United States did not feel that finding a peaceful solution was the best use of their time and resources when faced with international Communism. Of course, looking back on the issue we can see that Washington's stalling on the shipment of arms to Egypt and the lack

of real pressure on Israel pushed Nasser to negotiating an arms deal with the Soviet-controlled Czechoslovakia.

The next egregious error on Dulles's part was to assume that Nasser's decision to turn to the Soviets for arms was part of a third world game of playing the superpowers against one another. Although authors such as Divine (1981) argue that Nasser was in fact trying to punish the West for attempting to force the Baghdad Pact on the Middle East, I argue that from the statements made by Nasser, his circumstances, and the fact that he went to the U.S. initially shows that the president made his decision for the Czech Arms Deal based on a real need that the U.S. was not filling. Lenczowski's (1971) argument for this as an example of U.S.-Egyptian estrangement and not necessarily an Egyptian preference for Soviet friendship seems more reasonable when one remembers Nasser's own stance of neutrality. Nasser stood for Arab unity, pan-Arabism. Neff (1981) contends that the U.S.'s disposition was one of "blind refusal" and that they could not see the "profound implications of the rise of Arab nationalism, a new force that was neither East nor West (80).

The Aswan Dam (1955-1956)

Different historians conjecture different reasons for why the United States and Great Britain decided to help Egypt and Nasser by assisting with the construction of the Aswan Dam. There appear to be only benefits from such an effort. Since the end of World War II, the United States began a process of assisting other countries in their development, beginning with the reconstruction of Western Europe. The U.S. already had such a habit, and money was not necessarily a large issue for the superpower at the time. The benefits included a better

relationship with Egypt and therefore Arabs, inflicting a “loss” on the Soviets by expanding their influence in the world, an upper hand in applying pressure on the Arab Israeli conflict, and assisting the growth of an important country in the region. However, Nasser did not agree with the terms of the aid, policies he believed would weaken the Egyptian economy. His acceptance of the idea of seeking help from the Russians proved a trend that began with the arms deal. However, I must note here that I am not implying that the World Bank should have adjusted the stipulations for assistance. Many of the requirements were general policies of the international organization intended to help stimulate growth by introducing responsible financial policies to developing countries. Instead I would like to bring forward the observation that in both instances when Nasser needed assistance he first approached the West. When that did not work only then did he turn to the Soviets to fill a need that he felt obligated to fulfill in order to satisfy the demands of his domestic politics. As also discussed by Citino (2012), Naguib, an Egyptian living in Egypt during this period, stated in an interview that Egyptians loved the United States and preferred them as a partner. He could not recall why the U.S. withdrew its offer but noted how embarrassed his president looked after the news became public (1 Sept. 2012). Nasser did not see the doctrines of the East or the West as the only solutions in running a state. Instead, he believed that pan-Arabism, a dependence of Arabs on Arabs in sense of unity, existed as a third option and one that he opted for. Thus going to either the West or the East held no long-term implications to the Egyptian. He did it out of necessity. Although it was a necessity for him, I reiterate, his initial preference in both cases of arms and the Aswan Dam, Nasser showed a preference of working with the United States over the Soviet Union. He would, however, go to the Soviets if he absolutely must. The Egyptian people mirrored their president’s preference for the U.S. Naguib recalled how much his country lost because of what he called a poor business

deal, stating “we [Egyptians] never wanted it” (1 Sept. 2012). He concluded his interview by expressing his hopes that something similar to the failed Aswan Dam cooperation between the U.S. and Egypt never happens again.

By the time Nasser hinted to the world that he had a counter offer of financing for the Dam by the Soviets, anti-Egyptian sentiment was evident in the United States. The election of 1956 only served to further divide the politics between Arabs and Israelis. Many began to mirror Senator Estes Kefauver’s argument that Israel stood as the only beacon of democracy in a region that was informally led by a Communist-friendly Arab. The whole country held the fervor of the “with us or against us” mentality. Perhaps Eisenhower’s and Dulles’s subsequent plan to isolate Nasser from everyone except the Communists in part came from an effort to mollify the cries of the Democratic Party who staunchly supported Israel against Egypt. Of course, the president was convinced that such a plan would inevitably show Nasser the evils of the Soviet Union and that the Egyptian would return to the West in a more submissive manner. Washington maintained the belief that Nasser’s going back and forth between the two great powers was his way of wringing the most benefits out of the Cold War situation. However, events began to unfold that would elevate the U.S.’s desire to teach Nasser a lesson to straight-forward punishing him. The Israeli raid on Gaza followed by the U.S. approved French shipment of arms to Israel pushed Nasser too far. His retaliation of recognizing Communist China pushed Washington over the edge. His list of grievances rose too high for the United States so that when Ambassador Hussein visited Eisenhower to accept the West’s offer for the Aswan Dam, the offer no longer existed. Although the official reasons for taking it off the table fell under economic shortcomings, the overall impression was a political slap for Nasser. Dulles did not see a neutral Nasser. The cold warrior

saw a supposed or potential ally who continuously went to the West's greatest enemy for help when he did not get his way. As emphasized with its dealings in regards to the Baghdad Pact, the U.S. seemed to fail to understand the true disposition of Egypt and the Middle East. It inaccurately believed that its war with the Soviets pervaded the thoughts and agendas of all countries in the world. This was not so with Nasser, and the unintended consequences of the U.S.'s dealings with him led to a conflict which greatly tarnished the West's international reputation even in the face of a Soviet crackdown.

The Suez War (1956-1957)

Historians credit the Suez Crisis as one of America's great moments where it chose morals over personal gains. However, Eisenhower's decision to stand against three of its closest allies was not solely in spite of any benefits it might have yielded. Although even Dulles worked towards indirectly pressuring Egypt for regime change which would have rid the U.S. of a troublesome leader, Eisenhower did not believe a military operation would induce a change in power in Egypt (Oren 2007, 514). In fact, he did not think much good would come from using armed force in this situation. Europe depended on the passageway for shipping, but Eisenhower looked not at this but rather the larger picture not only for the good of the United States but also for Europe. The most important economic factor for Europe remained its access to oil, currently controlled by the Arabs. At least at this point in his career, Nasser served as the spokesman for Arab unity. Striking out against the father of pan-Arabism whose act of defiance brought Arabs together would not bode well with those Arabs in control of the much needed life-force for Europe. So long as the Egyptians kept the canal running smoothly and as efficiently as before, Eisenhower saw only harm to come from an attempt to take back control of the Suez Canal. The Arabs' good

will of the West determined whether the capitalist countries would continue to have access to relatively cheap oil, but another motive lay in Eisenhower's decision to allow Nasser's contest. The Egyptian leader already showed on several occasions his lack of qualms in looking to the Soviets if he disagreed with the hand the Western countries dealt him. Attempting to overthrow this prominent figure would only send the Arabs running to the Soviet Union, now already in the region thanks to earlier U.S. policies.

In the beginning, the United States attempted a position of neutrality in the conflict. They froze Egyptian assets, but refused to do more. At the U.N., Dulles and Eisenhower attempted to stall their allies with Dulles even proposing the creation of C.A.S.U., an organization he later admitted had no real power. However, this act only warmed the war with the U.S.S.R. Moscow threatened to become involved if the association attempted to take back control of the canal. The Soviet Union's threat appears to come from the simple desire to impede on Western developments in the region since they held no will to actually go to war with the West over the canal. While Nasser had dealt with the Communists on a couple of occasions, each time it was a result of not agreeing with an initial Western offer. Despite Nasser's preference, the Soviets used the opportunity of Britain and France's violent reaction to the nationalization of the canal to assert itself as a protector of the Arabs against these colonialist powers. Once Israel became involved with the Western European countries, this relationship proved to become more and more accepted. By this point the United States found itself caught in the middle. With allies on one side and their great enemy trying to cozy itself with the majority of the people in a vitally important region in the world, Eisenhower's decision proved incredibly difficult. His choice

appeared as an attempt to amend his initial mistake of allowing the Soviets into the region in the first place.

During many of the following events the United States served merely as a spectator. While the French, British, and Israelis conspired secretly, the anti-Soviet protests in Eastern Europe opened up a new opportunity to hit the Communists hard. At least so Eisenhower thought. Once Israel began attacking Gaza, the West's chance passed. Almost immediately after this attack, the British and French strode in to the U.N. to declare their right to protect the canal in the current crisis and made preparations to start for the Suez. This charade fooled no one. The process began by the Western European countries stripped the West's ability to condemn the Soviets of their harsh crackdowns in Hungary and Poland. Eisenhower quickly realized how out of control America was with the situation and began to fight back through the U.N. with proposals and sanctions. While the window to utilize the Soviet actions in Eastern Europe passed, Eisenhower would not allow its allies' actions to guarantee the Arabs' loss of good faith in the West. He was determined not to lose them to the Soviets. If the British and French continued on this path, the Soviets might become involved, and Europe's access to oil would disappear. Fortunately for the U.S., Nasser did not want a war. Once the resolution for a cease fire passed, Egypt accepted it, forcing the British and French to turn their ships around in a moment of great embarrassment.

At the end of the crisis, the United States' position appeared oblique. They stood against their Western allies in a cause that would have undoubtedly had benefits for it in terms of attempting to replace Nasser's government with a pro-Western one. They also backed a leader, notorious even within the U.S. for his Soviet-friendly relations, who also received strong support from the

East, America's main enemy. From an international perspective, some probably speculated that the U.S. found itself on the other side of the fight. Premier Bulganin obviously thought so when he sent Eisenhower a letter calling for camaraderie against the aggressive European countries. However, Eisenhower's response to the letter cleared any doubt of such an occurrence. The U.S. president did not intend to fight from the same side of the Soviets in this conflict. His original intent was to prevent a change in Arab preference of a supporter. The reality that the Communists also backed Nasser only proved to Eisenhower how important it was to show Egypt and the rest of the Middle East that the United States cared for their best interests even against its own allies. Although Arabs looked on the U.S. favorably after the Suez Crisis, Soviet prestige in the region rose considerably. The next acts by Eisenhower would determine the U.S.'s relationships in the region for decades.

The Eisenhower Doctrine (1957)

The U.S. received unprecedented popularity in the Middle East in the immediacy after the Suez Crisis. The moment was expedient for Eisenhower to pull the Arabs out of the clutches of the Communists and welcome them back into good favor of the West. However, this did not happen for a number of reasons. Dulles's popularity with the Arabs quickly dropped at the beginning of 1957 when negotiating with Israeli forces for the withdrawal. Many Arabs believed the deal favored Israel, the aggressor, and that Dulles did not fight hard enough for them. While Arabs across the Middle East praised the United States, anti-Egyptian sentiment continued to abide within America. Americans still saw Nasser as a Soviet-friendly leader, a conclusion only bolstered by the Communists backing the Egyptian during the crisis. Thus when Nasser

requested food and aid as compensation for the war, from the U.S. perspective, denial was an appropriate response.

The Eisenhower Doctrine was arguably the greatest blunder made by the Eisenhower administration after the war. In an address to Congress which later evolved into the Doctrine, Eisenhower laid out a plan to prevent further Soviet penetration in the region through economic assistance and military assistance if a country “desired and deserved” it (Modern History Sourcebook). Eisenhower worded his address in such a way that cleared the United States from involving itself in regional issues, i.e. the Arab Israeli conflict. This sounds strikingly familiar to the U.S. mindset during the Baghdad Pact: an attempt to keep the Communists out of the region while also verily ignoring the most important issue in the region, one that was quickly determining which countries belong to which side in the Cold War. As if to compensate for mistakes made by the Baghdad Pact, the Doctrine recognized states’ rights to neutrality; however, their added requirement that the states show no signs of friendliness to “International Communism” ensured that a state’s only options were to deal with the West or with no one at all. This same mentality that the U.S. needed to swoop into the region to fill the vacuum once occupied by colonialism before the Soviets insulted Nasser who believed pan-Arabism could fill this role. To many Arabs, the Eisenhower Doctrine appeared as another ambiguous form of colonialism. After all, the United States still allied with the colonialist powers even after they attempted to once again impose themselves on the Middle East by initiating the Suez War. The Soviets, on the other hand, also offered economic assistance to these countries but without strings. As a result, Arab countries leaned towards the East when looking for assistance. Not only were they pulled in by the Soviets, but the Eisenhower Doctrine sufficiently gave many Arab

countries the needed push away from the West. However, not all Arab countries rebuffed the Eisenhower Doctrine. Western-friendly countries such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan signed it, continuing their stance alongside the U.S. who had been good to them economically. Nasser's concept of Arab unity seemed to shake as countries verbally abused one another for choosing one side or another. Stephens (1971) argues that this regional squabbling produced the end result that the United States attempted to prevent, greater Communist influence in the region. Likewise, Adams (1958) who witnessed this evolve first-hand concluded that the U.S.'s treatment of countries based on their attitude towards Communism created this internal bickering.

Still, Eisenhower had yet to make his worst mistake in this affair. When Eisenhower signed the Baghdad Pact in May that year, any doubts of the true intentions of the Eisenhower Doctrine lifted for Arabs. The connection between the Doctrine and the Baghdad Pact was now undeniable. They were essentially the same policy with the same goals and with the same misunderstanding of the region's politics. Israel still posed the greatest threat to Arabs in the region, not the Soviets, and yet, the United States treated the situation as if just the opposite were true. Instead of addressing this issue between two countries that the United States used to be neutral between, the superpower ignored the problem, writing it off as a regional issue and not one that concerned their greater goals of the Cold War. By this point, even though the U.S. supported Nasser during the Suez War, Egypt and other Arab countries such as Syria began to see the U.S. not as a helpful developed country but as a bulwark of colonialism, determined to exert its power to direct their policies and keep their economies weak. While this was not the original intent of the Eisenhower Doctrine, the perception of it and therefore reaction to it was

based on such a notion. The U.S not only failed to prevent the Soviet Union from extending its influence into the region, but it sent the Arab countries running to the Communists.

CHAPTER IV

COLD WAR IMPLICATIONS

U.S. Relations with Arabs and Israelis: Interwar Period 1961-1967

Many site the Six Day War of 1967 as the moment when the U.S. cemented its relationship with Israel. Although the relationship became apparent as a result of this crucial moment in the Arab Israeli conflict, I argue that Eisenhower laid the foundation for the U.S. preference of Israel years before Johnson entered the White House.

Kennedy's Presidency: Interwar Period 1961-1963

Coming out of the Suez War as a backer of Egypt and then landing in the mire of the Eisenhower Doctrine, the United States stood in an awkward position when Eisenhower left the White House in 1961. Egypt and Syria saw the U.S. as their enemy with a number of other Arab countries following their lead. Israel now had the impression that as a country, it could not depend on the U.S. for its security and self-preservation. Its relationship with America was not exactly antagonistic as a result of the Suez War, but tensions existed, at least with Washington. The American public on the other hand greatly supported Israel over Egypt, as evident by the election of democrat John F. Kennedy. However, Kennedy's policies reflected Eisenhower's goals of neutrality between the Israelis and the Arabs. Although his focus lay in other areas of the world, Kennedy remained mindful of the Middle East and the constant threat of an arms race in the region. Much like his predecessor, Kennedy worried about setting one off and felt reluctant at filling any orders for arms, and the topic became a priority for the new president. Despite this disposition, events in the Middle East progressed beyond America's control. Israel was in the

middle of possibly developing a nuclear program with the help of the French in the Negev Desert (Little 2008, 94). Along with this was the complication of a number of Middle Eastern countries receiving advanced arms from the Soviet Union. Kennedy along with William R. Polk therefore sought to improve relations with Nasser through personal diplomacy and aid. On May 11, the president wrote to Nasser and other Arab leaders, offering American assistance in possibly finding a peaceful solution between them and Israel. He also promised aid to “all Middle Eastern states that are determined to control their own destiny, to enhance the prosperity of their people, and to allow their neighbors to pursue the same fundamental aims” (Schlesinger 1965, 493-494). Immediately after writing the letter Kennedy received Ben Gurion in Washington in part to discuss Israel’s nuclear program and security. August 22 Nasser surprised Kennedy by responding to his letter with a long description of how Arabs perceive Israel and Palestine, how damaging the issue is for Arab-American relations, and even touching on how Kennedy should not allow the U.S.’s foreign policy to be dictated by his wish to garner Jewish votes in the election (Stephens 1971, 446-447). On one hand, Kennedy’s efforts at peacemaking showed promise because Cairo did not see anti-American protests even after word got out that the superpower sold requested Hawk missiles to Israel. However, the initiatives grew greatly diminished in part because of Israel’s refusal to allow Arab-Palestinians refugees to return, effectively stalling the peace talks (Stephens 1971, 447). Throughout his short term as president, Kennedy also had the opportunity to provide assurances to Israel of the U.S.’s good relationship with her. In 1963 Israel expressed great fear of being surrounded by radical Arabs states. Indeed, mobs in Jordan, angry about benign policies towards Israel, staged riots that threatened to end the Hashemite monarchy, and pro-Nasser governments came to power in both Iraq and Syria (Little 2008, 96). Kennedy had to reassure Ben Gurion’s well-founded fears that America cared

for Israel's security. After all, America did not stand with Israel in the last armed conflict in the region but in fact opposed it. In a letter dated October 2 to Levi Eshkol, the new Prime Minister of Israel, Kennedy reiterated America's "determination to see a prosperous Israel securely established in the Near East and accepted by her immediate neighbors" (Little 2008, 97). During Kennedy's term as president he attempted to mend the U.S.'s relationship with both Israel and the Arabs, providing aid and arms where he saw an imbalance in either. Unfortunately, the next month ended Kennedy's presidency abruptly with his assassination, handing the reigns over to Johnson and sufficiently halting Kennedy's efforts. His three short years in the white house proved inadequate in repairing the damages Eisenhower unintentionally inflicted on the region. When Johnson swore in as president, the rifts in the U.S.'s relationships, products of Eisenhower's presidency that Kennedy attempted to mend, severed completely.

Johnson's Presidency: Interwar Period 1963-1967

Many argue that the close relationship between Israel and the United States was sealed during Johnson's time in the White House. Just several days after the tragedy of Kennedy's assassination, the President assured Golda Meir, an Israeli politician who later served as Prime Minister, that though they lost a friend when Kennedy died, they would find a better one with him (Little 2008, 98; Oren 2007, 523). His preference for Israel was evident even down to his advisers, a number of which were American Jews with pro-Israeli views. Extending this illustration, Tyler (2000) describes Johnson as a president who viewed Nasser as an extension of Communism's expansion and a danger to Israel (67). In the region itself, calls from Arab leaders to attack Israel intensified. As early as December of 1963 Nasser publicly acknowledged the

pressure he felt from other countries to go to war with the Jewish state (Stephens 1971, 449). However, this tension would continue to simmer for another four years.

The concerns of the Middle East for Johnson were often times secondary to other Cold War matters elsewhere in the world, much as the case with Kennedy. Of course the largest of these was the war in Vietnam. Johnson had little attention to ration to Nasser and the Middle East, and his decisions reflected how the war in Southeast Asia fared. His policies showed a strict adherence to a Cold War perspective and interpretation of other countries' actions. When the U.S. intervened in the Congo, Nasser responded with loud criticism, resulting in a cutoff of American aid (Stephens 1971, 457). This served as another example to Nasser of the disturbing policy of the superpower using aid as a ploy to achieve its foreign policy goals. He claimed that the United States had done the same in order to extract permission from him for nuclear inspectors to search Egyptian facilities of any signs of a nuclear weapons development program (Stephens 1971, 457). In a speech, Nasser claimed that the U.S. Under-Secretary of State, Strobe Talbot, threatened to give Israel no limit in types of arms from the U.S. if Nasser did not comply with such inspections (Stephens 1971, 457). Although they did not expect to find anything, Johnson performed such a show in order to have a counter argument against the Israelis who feared nuclear weapons in the hands of the Arabs despite the fact that they had a far greater capability of producing such weapons (Stephens 1971, 457). Stephens (1971) gives another example of such tactics by the U.S.: after a speech delivered to the United Arab Republic's National Assembly on November 25, 1965 in which Nasser proclaimed the efforts both Egypt and the U.S. were making to improve relations, the U.S. State Department announced a new deal for \$55 million worth of food aid to be delivered over the next six months to the country (458).

This series of events shows indicative evidence of Johnson's preoccupation in the Pacific as his policies in the Middle East before the Six Day War revealed a simple policy plan: if Nasser was good, the U.S. would be good to Nasser; if Nasser was critical of the U.S., the U.S. would punish him.

In an attempt to prevent war in the region, in the spring of 1967 Washington sent troubleshooter Harold Saunders to the Middle East to uncover the facts on the ground in this situation of heightening tensions. Little (2008) contends that Saunders, aware of Johnson's close relationship with Israel, reported that the Israelis saw Arab terrorism as their greatest threat and that the U.S. should do what they can to assist their ally (99). There were other motivations as well for assisting Israel against Arab terrorists. Johnson already stated he would not allow such aggression in Vietnam, and the public would not stand for him to allow these acts to go unchallenged against the Jewish state. Furthermore, Johnson's case that Israel had no need for nuclear deterrence seemed unsubstantiated in the face of this real danger. While it is safe to say that many predicted an exchange would occur, the timing was not optimal for any of the countries involved. Israel's economy was experiencing a recession and a third of the Egyptian army was in Yemen, fighting against the Saudis (Tyler 2009, 75). As a direct result of more public verbal attacks from Nasser, the U.S. cut off wheat shipments to the country (Tyler 2009, 76). To many in the United States, Nasser's image of an Arab Hitler evolved into a cartoon of a shrieking dictator.

Although the facts remain obscure, many argue that the Soviet Union began the progression for war in 1967. Authors on the conflict Isabella Ginor and Gideon Remez stated that the U.S.S.R. actually made proactive measures to provoke such a war between the Arabs and Israel (Ashton

2007, 2). Stephens (1971) concurs by adding that the Soviets continued to warn of the malicious intentions of Israel towards Syria (465). When the Soviet Union originally accused Israel of amassing troops on the Syrian border, Israel proposed Soviet Ambassador Dmitri Chuvakhin to see the situation on the ground personally. Despite the invitation, “Chuvakhin’s response was that his function was to communicate Soviet truths, not to put them to a test (Eban 1977, 316-319). It is interesting to note that about a week after Soviet foreign minister Gromyko visited Cairo in the spring of 1967, a more serious battle erupted on the Israeli-Syrian border which arguably marked the beginning of the ascendancy of tension towards the climax of war (Ashton 2007, 3; Stephens 1971, 465). Others, such as Oren (2007), believe that these Soviet reports had little effect on Nasser’s resolve to war with Israel but instead served as an excuse to set down the warpath (524). In the case of the United States, Johnson’s administration grudgingly confirmed that the closure of the Gulf of Aqaba to the Israelis qualified as an impediment to a commitment given to them by Eisenhower after the Suez Crisis. However, U.S. politics were already stretched thin by the war in Vietnam and the anti-war sentiment at home. Johnson could not afford to allow Israel to pull it into another war as the instigator. On multiply occasions Johnson stated that Israel would not be alone in this conflict “unless it chose to go alone” (Tyler 2009, 88). Despite all the warnings that the U.S. gave to Eshkol, by this time Israel was a clear, main American ally in the conflict. They continued to grant them shipments of arms and when Israel struck first on June 5, Johnson was not as preoccupied with the fact that his pleas for patience were ignored so much as he was concerned for how the Israelis fared in the battle (Tyler 2009, 74).

Unintended Consequences

Johnson made little or no attempts at continuing Eisenhower's policy of neutrality between the Arabs and Israelis nor Kennedy's efforts at repairing the relationship hurt by the Eisenhower administration. Johnson instead focused the little attention he gave to the region on building up the U.S.'s relationship with Israel, confirming what Arabs thought all along: that the United States preferred their 'pet' Israel over them. However, Johnson's preference did not completely alter the situation in the Middle East in regards to the U.S. relations there. His policies merely echoed the inclination of his constituency. Since the Eisenhower administration, citizens and politicians showed anti-Egyptian sentiment and pro-Israel support as mentioned previously under Chapter II (see section The Czech Arms Deal and The Aswan Dam). Because Johnson continuously found himself preoccupied by the war in Vietnam, he was not able to allot the appropriate time or consideration to the consequences of not addressing the problems in America's relations with a number of the Arab countries that were the results of Eisenhower's policies. Kennedy's efforts might have altered the situation leading up to Israel's attack on Egypt in June of 1967. However, his inability to fix the unintended consequences that Eisenhower bestowed on U.S. relations with the Arabs and not Johnson's out-of-the-blue unfettered support of Israel that ultimately directed U.S. preference. Nevertheless, these ramifications were a direct result of the policies of the Eisenhower administration. Before the Soviets penetrated the Middle East, when the U.S. claimed a stance of staunch neutrality between the Arabs and Israelis, Dulles ignored the regional politics and instead focused on the U.S. priorities of the Cold War. His attempts to force Cold War policies, such as the Baghdad Pact, on countries that did not care about the war between the superpowers angered and alienated them. Continued disregard for the largest regional conflict, the Arab Israeli issue, opened the door to the Communists for arms

sales to Egypt in the Czech Arms Deal which led to more sales to other pro-Nasser countries. Then the U.S.'s attempt to punish Nasser's Communist-friendly actions by withholding aid for the Aswan Dam resulted in Egypt nationalizing the Suez Canal and bringing about the Suez War. By this point, a snow ball effect was in place. The Soviets already had influence in the region thanks to the United States, and the actions of the U.S.'s allies cost the West dearly in the Cold War fight. Proxy wars now began. The Soviets backed Egypt against Great Britain and France and were hailed as defenders of the Arabs for it. Eisenhower could also not use international condemnation against the U.S.S.R. when they violently put down anti-Soviet protests in Poland and Hungary. The U.S. did not directly cause the war, but they perfectly set up the dominos that subsequently fell into place. After all of this, the United States had a real chance to take advantage of its position of neutrality. It stood for morality and rights against its allies in the Suez Crisis and showed its sincerity at being impartial. However, Eisenhower and Dulles allowed the opportunity to slip by. Instead, they reverted back to the same mindset they held before the Suez War and the Czech Arms Deal. Their focus returned to a Cold War mindset, devoid of any distractions of regional politics or feelings. The Eisenhower Doctrine effectively ended any chance to utilize the U.S.'s popular sentiment among the Arabs. It reflected the isolating and antagonizing Baghdad Pact, and when the U.S. finally signed the previous military alliance, this confirmed the relationship between the two policies for the Arabs. The U.S. would not listen to them. The U.S. did not care about their fears of Israeli encroachment and aggression. The U.S. cared only for the Cold War and hurting the Soviet Union in any manner possible. The U.S. would only view countries from a two-part lens, either pro-West or pro-East.

The policies of Eisenhower and Dulles pushed Nasser, a neutral leader in the Cold War, into the arms of the Soviets in their attempts to prevent such an occurrence. They then became angry at him for it and tried to punish him. As the speaker for Arab unity and strength, other Arab countries naturally followed Nasser in his anger against the U.S., and after the Suez War, the U.S.S.R. became associated with supporting Arabs. Johnson did not necessarily choose Israel for the U.S. Eisenhower pushed the Arabs away, and Kennedy did not live long enough to undo this great mistake. Johnson merely secured a relationship whose foundation was already laid two administrations before his. His preference simply reflected the sentiment already pervading throughout the United States. The Six Day War clearly confirmed this for the rest of the world.

Other Factors

Such a complex topic as this has an incredible number of other variables whose influence on the topic should be discussed as they are arguable alternatives to the thesis I presented. Here I will address two such factors.

Jewish Lobbies in the U.S.

Before the creation of Israel, the United States served as the largest proponent of Jewish Zionism. This sentiment within the country only grew after the U.S.'s recognition of Israel. Powerful Jewish lobbies rose to power on Capitol Hill, determined to assure that the United States held favorable views and policies towards the new country. Eisenhower acknowledged the need to placate these entities on numerous occasions such as in his decision to not sell arms directly to the Arabs and instead allow the British to manage it. Although Eisenhower needed to remain mindful of these lobbies when making decisions they certainly did not direct his

decisions. True, the U.S. dealt with Egypt in aid and not arms, but similarly Eisenhower did not sell arms to Israel either. This not only stemmed from the president's goals of neutrality but also from his desire to prevent an arms race in the Middle East. The Suez War perhaps presents the best example from this research of Eisenhower's independence of the Jewish lobbies.

Eisenhower had many convincing reasons to side with Great Britain, France, and Israel. They were all allies and even Dulles wanted Nasser gone. However, the most compelling argument for the president which provided him with the reasoning for his decision lay at the core of the entirety of U.S. policy at the time: Cold War consequences. The Soviets were quickly gaining access to the region, tempting Arab countries away from the Western sphere of influence with economic aid and weapons. Eisenhower did not want to lose the partnership with oil-controlling Arabs. Oil proved crucial in World War II, and Eisenhower made access to it a priority. While the Jewish lobbies were a formidable force in American domestic politics, Eisenhower certainly did not allow them to direct his foreign policy decisions concerning the Middle East.

Johnson's Preference for Israel

Despite his personally strong views and feelings towards Israel, Johnson's pragmatism dominated his disposition towards them. One of the few times the president found himself at odds with Eshkol was over an arms shipment to Jordan. However, Johnson's arguments for keeping the Soviet influence out of the kingdom quieted Israel who shared after all, the same policy goals in the region as the United States (Tyler 2009, 68). As for another example, in 1964 when Israel asked for tanks, Johnson hesitated (Little 2008, 98). However, after assessing the military balance in the region, he determined in March that the U.S. should open up their arsenals to the Israelis who had fallen behind the Arabs who continued to receive their arms from

the Soviets (Little 2008, 98). He believed that such a maneuver would pacify the Israelis so as to discontinue their work on a nuclear weapon and thus prevent a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. His ultimate goal in the region, as with all of his other foreign policy decisions, found its roots in the Cold War. As stated previously, the country-wide preference for democratic Israel over perceived pro-Communist Arab countries pervaded even Eisenhower's politics. Johnson had little time or attention to allocate to the problems in the Middle East and succumbed to over-simplified policies: determining U.S. relations solely based on a leader's actions through a Cold War perspective with no intention of altering current relations. This over-simplified policy exacerbated the tensions already existing between the United States and countries like Egypt. Johnson did not "choose" Israel over the Arabs but instead allowed his policies to narrowly follow the preference flow from the stream's head, Eisenhower.

Sentiments of the United States, the Cold War, and the Arab Israeli Conflict

The Cold War served as the greatest example for political scientists of the situation of a bipolar world. Waltz (1988) details this type of world as one in which the main parties involved respond quickly to conflict as a loss for one side is automatically interpreted as a gain for the other and ensuring the happiness of allies is not necessarily a priority (622). The historical background provided by this research affords numerous examples to the accuracy of Waltz's (1988) conclusions. Eisenhower and Dulles considered any gain by the Soviets automatically as a Western loss (Neff 1981, 141). The U.S. saw the overarching goals of the Cold War as more important than the benefits of backing its allies in the Suez War. Especially once the Soviets gained influence in the Middle East, the U.S.S.R. quickly responded to Egypt each time the Arab country found difficulty in working with the West such as in the Czech Arms Deal or providing

an alternative in funding the Aswan Dam. Although America gave preference to the democratic state of Israel, a loss of relations with the Communist-friendly Arab countries was still considered a defeat. A few participants in this research stated in their interviews that this duality of world power did produce positive effects. Khassib noted that the competition between the two superpowers led to the creation and improvement in many fields such as medicine and engineering (19 July 2012). Similarly, Al-Faouri, the Dean of the Language Center at the University of Jordan, said that the situation of the U.S. holding the position as sole superpower in the world is unfair. The two powers during the Cold War created a neutral field which was better for the people of the Middle East (19 July 2012).

There are those, such as Frank Halliday, who argue that the Cold War had little influence on the major trends in the Middle East, such as the Arab Israeli conflict and Arab nationalism (Ashton 2007, 2). Although this may arguably prove true, Fawaz Gerges counters that the Cold War certainly exacerbated the tensions already present (Ashton 2007, 2). However, with little doubt, the Cold War greatly impacted how the United States interacted with the region. Former U.S. Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates (1996), even stated that the Middle East served as the stage for the most “unbridled and intense” contest between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. (39). All research participants in this study who received the question agreed that the Cold War greatly influenced the mindset and policies of the U.S. in the region (Al-Kasaji, 24 July 2012; Dr. Paul, 12 July 2012; Napper, 17 Oct. 2012; Olson, 24 Sept. 2012). Dr. Paul stated that the war “tremendously” influenced events and this led to many “short sighted decisions” on behalf of the United States (12 July 2012). James Olson, former Director of Operations of the C.I.A., similarly resolved that the U.S. had an “obsessive fixation” on the Cold War, especially in its early years (24 Sept.

2012). He went on to say that the real driving force for foreign policy was anticommunism which was particularly true during Eisenhower's presidency; the Dulles brothers acted as a force of containment as the Soviet Union spread its influence farther into the world. He even concluded his interview by emphasizing how much the Cold War shaped foreign policy for the U.S. It was the "overriding issue" by which all policies held undertones in reverence to it (24 Sept. 2012).

Undeniably, the U.S. saw itself in a battle between good versus evil. Gates (1996) writes that the U.S.S.R. "*was an evil empire*" [italics in original], citing information gathered from Soviet archives as his evidence (575). Olson's interview also agrees with this viewpoint but adds that this was not necessarily a wrong point of view (24 Sept. 2012). Odd Arne Westad believed that America saw itself as an "Empire of Liberty" who viewed its primary goal as preventing third world countries from getting lashed to the Communist ideology and thus depriving themselves of capitalism which represented freedom (Rashid 2009, 163-164). However, this core value did not lend to the promotion of political freedom, democracy, in these third world countries. Former ambassador Larry Napper contended that the Cold War forced the U.S. to search for proxy countries to counter the Soviet Union leading directly to the cementing of the U.S. relationship with Israel, Saudi Arabia, and later Mubarak of Egypt (17 Oct. 2012). Indeed, the U.S.S.R. became associated with backing nationalist regimes while the United States tended to lean towards absolute monarchies such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, and other Gulf States and authoritarian regimes like in Jordan Tunisia, and Morocco (Rashid 2009, 21). As outlined by Waltz (1988), the two sides reacted quickly to any changes in the status quo which sometimes resulted in an exchanging of proxies. Dr. Paul noted such "our friend is our friend until he's not our friend" relationships with the Taliban in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein of Iraq (12 July 2012).

Interestingly, the Cold War for America held a distinctive faith-based appeal. When discussing his personal experiences with the Cold War, Olson declared that he and others who fought the Soviets were “on a crusade to protect our country” (24 Sept. 2012). A core aspect of Soviet Communism was atheism. Thus, the predominantly Christian country of the United States felt confronted even in this realm. Even as early as Roosevelt this rung true. Patrick Hurley, Roosevelt’s personal emissary to the region told the Moroccan grand vizier that “the United States would stand with God-fearing Muslims against the threat of communist atheism” (Oren 2007, 455). Rashid (2009) likewise notes that Islam became an important part of America’s ideology in finding friends in the Middle East, adding that this became an important force in mobilizing allies (20 & 22). During his interview, Naguib stated that Egyptians had a natural tendency to like Christians over the atheists (1 Sept. 2012). Militant Islam, particularly in the war between Afghanistan and the U.S.S.R., became associated with the United States at the time. Expanding on this topic, Dr. Paul stated that the mujahedeen did not even make much of an attempt to side with the U.S. in the war even when taking the government’s money; The United States, for their part, did not consider the consequences of the alliance as much as taking advantage of a situation in which they believed could “bog down” the U.S.S.R. (12 July 2012). Little did the U.S. politicians know that many members of the mujahedeen would turn around and later claim holy jihad on them as well.

Through the interviews conducted in this research, a few of the American participants also provided their own experiences of being a U.S. citizen during this long period of the Cold War. Olson recalled the great fear in the population of getting attacked or even losing the overall war. He illustrated a childhood memory during the 1950’s in which he overheard the adults in his

house discussing plans of building a family bomb shelter (24 Sept. 2012). Dr. Paul recalled seeing on the news the turbulent aftermath of the Iran-Contra scandal as part of the overall “secret government” sentiment in the country that developed during the Cold War (12 July 2012).

All of the Palestinian and Jordanian research participants at one point or another brought up the topic of the U.S.’s involvement with finding a peace solution between the Arabs and the Israelis though they were not prompted with any question addressing this issue. Khassib, a Palestinian living in Jordan, mentioned how much Arabs respected the U.S. during the Cold War even though they sided with Israel, but since the collapse of the Soviet Union the superpower seems to have only incurred enemies. He believed no one got hurt overall except for the Palestinians (19 July 2012). At this point, Khassib appeared uncomfortable and ended the interview. During a discussion about Palestine with his teenage daughter, she disclosed to me how her father told her to forget about Palestine and that they would never be able to return so she should simply forget about it. Their family’s home lies not in the recognized area of Israel but in the West Bank, near Ramallah, possibly indicating a belief that that area would not belong to the Palestinians in the future. On the other hand, Dr. Muna, a Western educated Jordanian working at the Ministry of Education, declared that the Palestinians belong in their own country and not in hers. Referring to how much the Palestinian population and influence has grown in Amman, she confessed “I live in a country that is not my country” (16 July 2012). Al-Faouri explicitly stated that the power to pressure the Palestinians and Israelis lay in the U.S.’s hands. It needs to push for more resolutions and urge greater cooperation from Israel. He concluded that the conflict with Israel was a core problem in the world, mirroring much of the sentiment Dulles received during his

tour of the Middle East in 1953. Solving this issue will be good for both parties and release funds for greater development, but the United States has to be the one to facilitate this and not another European power or anyone else (19 July 2012).

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

During the years of the Cold War, the United States fixed itself and the vast majority of its subsequent actions on opposing the Soviet Union and international Communism. This objective dominated its foreign policy agenda until the fall of the U.S.S.R. in 1991. The use of proxies in this struggle became commonplace beginning with Eisenhower's years in the White House. Naturally, the inclusion of third world countries into this conflict also affected said countries domestic politics and welfare. In this research I focused on the Middle East, specifically Egypt due to its prodigious standing in the Arab world at that time thanks to its leader President Gamal Abdel Nasser and his pan-Arabism ideology. I argued that Eisenhower and Dulles's policies in regards to the region were extremely narrow minded and resulted in losing a number of possible allies in the war, naturally a victory for the Communists. The disfavor the American public found with Nasser for receiving Soviet assistance led to anti-Egyptian sentiment which increased a preference for Israel. Although Kennedy attempted to remedy the tense relations with Egypt, his sudden death ended Eisenhower's policy of neutrality between the Arabs and Israelis. Johnson, preoccupied by the warmer fronts of the Cold War, gave little attention to the region and laid the final stone in the foundation of the U.S.'s striking relationship with Israel already begun by past administrations. The unintended consequences of Eisenhower's policies helped guide the inclination of the superpowers to using proxy countries in the Middle East and then subsequently lost half of the countries in the region, including the pivotal leader Egypt, to the Communists. America, with the greatest position in establishing a peace agreement between the Arabs and Israelis, made no real attempts to resolve this issue but eventually played its part along with the

Soviet Union in arming the combatants, assisting with the commencement of an almost constant state of wars between the two sides: the Six Day War (1967), the War of Attrition (1967-1970), and the Yom Kippur War (1973).

While the U.S. relationship with Israel and key Arab states like Egypt remains an important aspect of its foreign policy in the Middle East, America's Cold War policy interactions with other countries in other times during the era also greatly impacted the projection of the region into the present day. The decisions of the respective presidents who oversaw these expeditions should also be studied under this same context. For example, Eisenhower participated in Operation AJAX which overthrew the democratically elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadeq of Iran because of Britain's annoyance with the Persian for nationalizing his country's oil company and perception of his agenda leaning too far to the left. Another moment in history that should be closely examined with the Cold War objectives in mind is the U.S.'s position in the Yom Kippur War, arguably the apex of tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States over their respective proxies in the region. Ultimately, the history of America's involvement in the Middle East during the Cold War years should be further examined so as to determine how many of its seedy associations and decisions led to the rise and sustainment of conditions that eventually proved unstable. Many of the leaders who fell and whose thrones shake even now as the Arab Spring continues were men with whom the United States backed or at least consorted. Policymakers must acknowledge the far reaching consequences narrow objectives can have on other countries.

The flavor of the month for the United States in the Middle East continues to showcase as terrorism. However one views George W. Bush or the war in Iraq, Hosni Mubarak's words ring true, that by invading, the U.S. created a hundred Bin Ladens and made some of the moderate public more open to these types of reactionary movements (Polk 2005, 201-202). Already the consequences of misguided and narrow policies in and perceptions of the region in the post 9/11 world have resulted negatively for the United States. Studies that reveal how much these focused policies can affect third party countries and the U.S. itself need to be further examined and taken into consideration when constructing proposals. I hypothesize that this would reveal the imperative that America cannot afford to narrowly focus on one umbrella goal or objective for foreign policy but must consider the local politics of the region more closely and consider the greater consequences of the policies they employ in the Middle East. These can extend even beyond the era in which these objectives were conceived. For example, the U.S.'s unfettered support of Israel surfaces among the grievances of many Islamic extremist groups that wish to destroy America, such as Al-Qaeda and Hezbollah (Kraemer, 1989; United States Army Combined Arms Center). Certainly Johnson had little idea that relations with the Arabs would turn so sour, and Eisenhower probably would not have let the matter alone in his own presidential term.

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